



Sample of Salazar's tweets, showing her distorted political ideology which is clearly progressive and not socialist one bit.

The significance of Julia Salazar running as a “socialist” Democrat: 18-page version

By Leftist Critic

This is the version I submitted to an editor of Dissident Voice on September 22nd. Certain paragraphs were further contracted in the final version of the article which was published on Dissident Voice and [reposted on my personal WordPress](#). I have double-spaced this version of the article to make it easier to read, and the notes section has been changed to footnotes. Otherwise, no other changes were made.

On September 13, a 27-year-old woman, Julia Carmel Salazar won the Democratic primary against Martin Dilan, becoming the [State Senate candidate](#) for North Brooklyn’s District 18 (shaped like [a praying mantis](#)), called Salazar in this article. Apart from her right-wing politics which lasted until 2014, covered in part 2 of this article series, there are many other issues, revolving around her role as a “socialist” of the NYC-[DSA](#) running in a Democratic primary. This article aims to talk about those issues and the significance of her candidacy, with her almost-assured victory in November, beyond Ben Beckett’s hot takes in *Jacobin* that her victory on September 13 “felt good” and that she was “attacked” in her supposed effort to build a “policy base that a new voter self-identity can be anchored in.”

With some media outlets calling her a “Latina democratic socialist” (*Gothamist*), “young and Latina, posed and [progressive](#), and a democratic socialist” (*New York Times*), or a “[Jewish](#) Latina democratic socialist candidate” heading a “burgeoning progressive Jewish revolution” (*Jewish Telegraph Agency*) who sits among the “[young progressive women](#)” Michelle Goldberg recently wrote about in the *New York Times*, there are undoubtedly many articles about her positions. These media outlets see her [as more](#) than a “[jumped-up nobody](#) running for a state senate seat in Brooklyn,” [allowing](#) her campaign to become a runaway national story. She is described as a “socialist” (or as some call it “suddenly socialist”) and [a DSA](#) member, [calling herself](#) “an advocate, a tenant, a feminist, a democratic socialist, a union member.”¹ She stands for universal [rent control](#), [tech-utopism](#), ending

1 Salazar defines socialism as about “fighting to build a society in which everybody can live in dignity and have the resources to live as equitably as possible [and to have] the resources that we need not only to survive but to thrive in our society. It’s about empowering workers as far as my own theory of change...empowering the most marginalized and vulnerable members of our society.” She then told *Teen Vogue* that “being a democratic socialist means fighting to build a society in which everyone is cared for and has the resources that we need to not only to survive but to thrive in our society. It means that everybody will truly have autonomy and control over their own destinies. I think that part of the vision of fighting for a society in which everyone is able to thrive and has control of their own destiny means acknowledging gender inequality and patriarchy in our society. It requires working to dismantle patriarchy and to counteract gender inequality and fight for a society in which women and gender nonconforming people are no longer oppressed systemically.” While that is nice, it doesn’t really sound “socialist” to me. The fourth edition of *Webster’s New World College Dictionary* defines it on page 1360 as “any of the various theories or systems of ownership and operation of the means of production by society or the community sharing the work and products” and as “the stage in society, in Marxist doctrine, coming between the capitalist stage and the communist age, in which private ownership of the means of production and distribution have been eliminated.” The first definition is the one I’d like the focus on, rather than the second one as the US is still strongly in a capitalist society despite the goofs that say it is “post-capitalist.” Nothing about building a fairer society, which Salazar says she is for, is about moving toward society or the

vacancy decontrol, [abolishing ICE](#), single-payer [healthcare](#) usually described as [Medicare For All](#), ending cash bail, [fixing the subway system](#) (and [mass transit](#)), ending “policies aimed at eliminating mass incarceration,” money for affordable housing, free tuition at CUNY and SUNY schools, and immigrant rights, while [favoring reproductive rights](#) and [unions](#). These are [socially democratic positions](#) which aren’t necessarily “socialist.” She also endorsed the call for BDS (Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions), which held by NYC-DSA, while criticizing the two-state solution.² This [position on Palestine](#) is part of the reason for the [negative articles](#) in the *Daily Mail*, *Forward*, and the *Tablet*, most prominently, and was likely pushed by Zionist agents and perhaps the real estate industry, connected with her gender, as I have pointed on Twitter as a person who is critical of Salazar. Some, like Ryan Grim of *the Intercept*, Pierre Omidyar’s plaything, [have said](#) that after Salazar’s victory, “Big winners tonight appear to be: Tablet, Page Six and the Daily Mail, who get to [keep writing](#) about @SalazarSenate18 for the foreseeable future.” That has validity except it misses the significance of her candidacy.

As Salazar said at one point, “my vision is for a more caring society in which nobody is denied what they need to thrive based on income, on property, on capital. This is not what is going to happen the day [I’m elected to the state Senate](#) — that would be cool though. I’m realistic, but without that vision, this is pretty much a futile exercise.” This “cool” factor, where she says she would be “fine” if her victory led to “the end of capitalism” (which it obviously won’t), plays into the fact that her

community owning the means of production. Cuba and the DPRK, arguably, rather than the revisionist triad (Laos, Vietnam, and China), fall within the second stage, but how much they do this is obviously up for debate.

- 2 When interviewed on a DSA podcast, Salazar [seemed to differentiate](#) the societies of the US and the Zionist state, saying that “I think that both American and Israeli society are in crisis as a result of hyper-militarization of our societies, and our law enforcement, our government institutions that are ostensibly supposed to protect us. The effects are obviously felt vastly disproportionately by one part of population. And obviously in the US, it’s disproportionately affecting Black Americans and people of color, but most obviously Black Americans, and we know it’s rooted in a hideous legacy of slavery. Whereas in Israel and Palestine, it’s rooted in a history of inequality that’s been there since the establishment of the state. I see it as a product of having a hyper-militarized police force in a society that has been and often still is taught a pretty racist narrative.” While that has validity, the history of inequality has been there since the founding of the US. This is a statement which is ignorant without question, not realizing the parallels between the two countries and the racist, sexist, and classist history of the US since its founding, as a state, in 1783 and as an independent entity in 1776.

campaign headquarters in Bushwick sits near a “hipster” shop, with scores of volunteers ([many of whom are DSA members](#)) [canvassing](#) in “friendly political territory,” and receiving a huge amount of campaign donations after Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, another “socialist” running in the Democratic Party, [endorsed her](#), while Radix Media [printed her posters](#). As *The Intercept* even admitted: “Salazar’s road to Albany might be made easier by the same counterintuitive factor that helped propel Ocasio-Cortez to victory: gentrification,” with this being the case because “[white transplants](#)...tend to support Bernie Sanders-type universal programs.” This reality was evident from *The New Yorker*’s photos [of a victory party for Salazar on September 13](#) in East Williamsburg, Brooklyn, which included a smattering of people of color, but more white men and women than anything else. *The New Yorker* addressed this directly in their article, writing that “the crowd [there] whose arrival often heralds gentrification—the young bearded types at the party—had worked on the campaign...The hipsters who come to the neighborhood for the “right reasons,” as [Tasha] Van Auken [Salazar’s campaign manager] put it, are actually working to keep older residents safely in their homes.” At the same time a *BuzzFeed* article noted that the supporters of Salazar, “certainly the young, mostly white, recent college graduates who flooded her victory party...didn’t recognize, at least subconsciously, that this kind of thing is just way more common than we’d like to admit,” meaning they were more like Salazar than they would admit off the bat. This connects to what her former opponent, [Dilan](#), called her: a gentrifier who recently moved into the area even though she [opposes](#) gentrification and she has lived in the same apartment in Bushwick [for years](#). As one strident critic of Salazar [put it recently](#), the campaign’s winning strategy was to target a gentrifying district, then use the “DSA as footsoldiers to turn out the white voters.” This effort, which [reportedly included](#) knocking on 100,000 doors, was a success in getting her elected, allowing her to integrate even more people [into](#) the faltering Democratic Party, which would make the head of the party smile even as they grumble about her viewpoints.

It is evident that Salazar is [trying to portray herself](#) as “hip,” with [some saying](#) that she “transformed, seemingly overnight, from an extreme right-wing Republican Right-To-Life Zionist zealot to a trendy [BernieCrat](#). She needs to offer a plausible account of how this happened.” This is evident from the fact that she [may be vegan](#) (or perhaps [vegetarian](#)), tweeted [a quote](#) from Howard Zinn, is blocked on Twitter [by Rosanne Barr](#), she has been called a “tattoo-wearing socialist” for her tattoo of “large black and white rose” near her [left shoulder](#) and another of plane [on her right arm](#) which *The Nation* calls “a memento of her father, whose death when she was 18 “shaped [her] life,”” the [look](#) of her campaign headquarters, [being](#) interviewed by those of Chapo Trap House (a “leftist” podcast which almost verges on being anti-communist), and her [long hair](#). It is also expressed through her “hot takes” on New York Governor Andrew [Cuomo](#), [legalizing](#) marijuana, [misogyny](#), [libertarians](#), [Tucker Carlson](#) of *Fox News*, and [protest chants](#). With this, it is no surprise that the UAW has called her a “[UAW sibling](#).” Also her reported “faith in humanity based on...the observation and the belief that as humans we don’t just operate selfishly, you know, that we can actually be in solidarity with one another, and not just with our people,” as she noted in a DSA podcast, it is part of this portrayal as well.

She also has [garnered](#) an unusual [constituency](#) for a politician which is “emerging as a force in electoral politics...because of the growing political threat against their industry”: [prostitutes](#), whom many outlets like to call “sex workers” claiming that they are just like other workers, by supporting the decriminalization of prostitution and attending “[sex worker advocacy meetings](#).” *The Intercept* even did a [whole article on the subject](#), declaring that she is “shaping her policy by consulting the sex work community, is one of the first candidates to definitively support those workers, including by proposing concrete steps toward decriminalization. In that article, she told the reporter that “sex workers are [workers](#) and they deserve to be treated with dignity, including protections and decent working conditions, rather than the abuse and criminalization that they currently face. I’m dedicated to defending workers’ rights, reforming our criminal justice system and ending exploitation, and we know

that criminalization puts everyone in sex work at risk rather than protecting them.” As a result, she stands against those feminists who are rightly critical of prostitution and rather with the [so-called](#) “sex worker lobby” which is probably [the lobby](#) for the sex industry. This would be the case because those glad with Salazar’s position include Melissa Gira Grant (who [doesn’t “acknowledge](#) the issue of masculine social dominance” on her book on “sex work”) and the Red Umbrella Project (part of a group [that is a front for pimps](#)). Grant was so glad with Salazar’s position that [she wrote an article](#) in *The Appeal*, a project of Tides Advocacy (formerly [the Advocacy Fund](#)), which is [an affiliate](#) of the Tides Foundation, which is a [major funder](#) of bourgeois environmental groups, [like 350.org](#), with Warren Buffet’s NoVo Foundation as one of the [biggest funders](#) of Tides. In her article, Grant declared, not surprisingly, that Salazar’s campaign has “provided a platform for sex workers to do some of that educational work [on prostitution], while offering a template for how the decriminalization fight could play out in other cities and states,” adding, in a joyful manner, that “her support for sex workers’ rights is unusual for a person running for office.” As Matthew Maavak has written, “[a civilization](#) where women and children are sexually commoditized is one in terminal decline,” a thought which is connected to what Tanner Stenning [has written](#): “if we’re to proceed in defending sex workers, let’s start by acknowledging at least this much: likeliest the vast majority would not choose sex work were the circumstances different.” This is further informed by what has been written in *Feminist Current*: that “prostitution [endlessly erects](#) the very patriarchal divisions between women that it allegedly destroys...As long as prostitution exists women and men will never be free from patriarchy,” that “[under the narrative](#) of “sex work” there can be no vulnerable person,” and that “[pro-sex trade voices](#) are...ubiquitous” to such an extent that the *New York Times* has [done articles](#) on the subject. The same publication also talked about [the gentrification](#) of prostitution, murders of prostitutes in New Zealand [where prostitution](#) has been decriminalized, certain people [discounting](#) rape of prostitutes, and trying to de-platform Chris Hedges for [taking a strong](#) anti-prostitution stand in his *Truthdig* columns.

While prostitutes have [flocked](#) to Salazar's campaign, Trotskyists [have endorsed](#) her, with Socialist Alternative [declaring](#) that her campaign's door knocking "is seen by many workers and youth as an important vehicle to fight back," but adding that "many DSA members want to [build mass movements](#) outside the electoral arena...a broader struggle to transform the party," while adding that "it's essentially impossible to rip the Democratic Party as a whole from its corporate leadership. To win far-reaching change a new mass workers party will be needed." Still, they support Salazar, saying her efforts are positive and are "generating support for many important issues that won't be won without struggle...A Salazar victory will be a...clear indication of the growing momentum for socialist ideas." Not so sure about that. Additionally, the Brooklyn branch of the ISO (International Socialist Organization), a Trotskyist organization, [also issued their support for Salazar](#), declaring their full support of her from "a nightmarish series of attacks...[a] steady and vicious smear campaign drummed up by both liberal and right-wing media outlets" and urging those "progressive allies who continue to dissect Salazar's background...to [not] equivocate, but to stand firmly on the side of solidarity, so that one of our own does not pay such a high price for standing up for all of us." Apparently standing on the side of solidarity means to be mimic her followers by not questioning her. Even Niles Niemuth is of the Trotskyist Socialist Equality Party, a candidate in Michigan, was [quoted in the party's website](#), the World Socialist Web Site (WSWS) as saying that "the DSA, which is a faction of the Democratic Party, not an independent party, promotes the fiction that the interests of workers can be secured without a frontal attack on the domination and wealth of the corporate and financial elite. It advances the lie that workers can win their rights through the instrument of the Democratic Party—a right wing, pro-capitalist party." On that point he may be right although Trotskyists have a distorted worldview which benefits the global bourgeoisie. Salazar may use words like capitalism and capital, while calling herself a socialist and declaring that her campaign was something "[revolutionary](#)," but she also has a progressive feel, with her website saying: "Julia is the leader we need to make New York City a safer,

more just, more welcoming place for everyone” and saying that the “abolition of private property” is not “realistic.” While she seemed to differentiate “[democratic socialism](#)” and “progressivism,” in an interview for *Jacobin*, saying the former means “to have a vision of a world where everyone is taken care of....a society in which people are valued over profit, in which everyone has access to the things they need not just for basic survival but to thrive” and that the latter might “advocate for forcing landlords to do necessary repairs on buildings,” her talk on the campaign trail, saying she [speaks](#) for the Latinx community, drawing strength [from “the long history](#) of Jewish [social justice](#) and Latinx social justice organizing” wants to [make](#) New York a “progressive beacon” or that she wants a “[true blue New York](#),” that she is part of a “[movement](#)” winning over the “[machine](#),” tells a different story.

It is doubtful that her ideas will “bring us closer to a truly socialist economic system,” as she claimed her campaign was part of, since, [as In These Times writes](#), “democratic socialism itself has always been a heterodox term, encompassing everyone from ideological Trotskyists to New Deal Democrats.” They also note that “DSA isn’t keen to enforce a strict definition of “democratic socialism,”” possibly meaning everything from “taking public goods like healthcare off the private market...to worker-ownership of the means of production.” The DSA, with a [chapter in NYC](#), also doesn’t want to play as a “[spoiler in general elections](#)” but would rather endorse “the most progressive candidates from other parties in primaries, while also running their own, further-to-the-left candidates in local Democratic races that are safely progressive.” Salazar can warn of ideas “becoming diluted when they leave the Left and enter the mainstream, province of politicians and political expediency,” and even admit that “the two-party system de facto disenfranchises people, and I can’t see [the Democratic Party](#) ultimately being a vessel for the democratic socialist revolution, so it would be silly and shortsighted for democratic socialists to put a lot of effort and resources into that project.” Still, she says that “it would be great if we could all avoid the [Democratic Party line](#)...but if I were to try to do that in this district, I highly doubt people would notice much less vote for a third-party candidate in the

general election.” Yet wanting to be part of a “[progressive wave](#),” being a person supposedly with “class politics and a materialist analysis,” will not get her the “socialist movement” that she [claims](#) she is part of. This is because she cannot be for a Bernie-style “[political revolution](#)” while being a “[fiery progressive](#)” who is still socialist and is [building](#) a “[movement](#).” Talking in Bernie-like language will just end up with her followers, after her victory, being swallowed into the Democratic Party. This is evident by the fact that there is a fundraiser for her on Act Blue, [which calls Salazar](#) “a dedicated community leader [running in the Democratic primary](#) for New York State Senate...committed to running a campaign by and for the people, sustained by grassroots donations from supporters like you,” [a Democratic PAC](#) which is independent of the Democratic Party and is part of “blue” Democratic brand. This is even the case if the words were written by her [campaign](#), as they also publicized their efforts as “[all grassroots](#).” It is also doubtful that while her victory will make her supporters gleeful, it will not be a “victory for workers” as she declared in [her victory speech](#) on the night of September 13.

The numerous individuals and groups who have endorsed her seem to put a question how grassroots her campaign was, especially considering the number of [out-of-state](#) donors (35% of her donor base). Her website lists Congresswoman [Nydia Velazquez](#), Councilman [Jumaane Williams](#), Councilman Antonio Reynoso, [Working Families](#), New York Communities for Change, DSA, [CWA](#), [CODEPINK](#), [Make the Road Action](#), Citizen Acton of New York, New York State Immigrant Action Fund, Carlina Rivera campaign, OUR Revolution, NYC DSA, NYC Kids PAC, New King Democrats, Brooklyn Progressive Action Network, New York Progressive Action Network, New York Professional Nurses Union, [The Jewish Vote](#), Amplify Her, Streets PAC, Grassroots Action New York, [Women](#) of Color for Progress, [UAW](#), and The [People for Bernie](#) as [endorsing](#) her [campaign](#). Even, the Zionist *Tablet* has written that “Salazar’s election [[victory](#)] would be a breakthrough for the city’s Jewish left: proof that their institutions can become a pathway to formal [political power](#), that anti-Zionist Jews can win high-profile elections, and that big things are possible when communities grow ravenous for some

kind of change.” She has also been supported by those [from the ACLU](#), progressive “socialist” [Lee J. Carter](#), [Insurrection magazine](#) (which she once published for in an article about virtual reality), NYC Comptroller [Scott Stringer](#), [Bhaskar Sunkara](#), the editor of socially-democratic *Jacobin*, “[progressive](#)” Democrats like [Cynthia Nixon](#) and [Zephyr Teachout](#), along with the typical [support](#) from [Berniecrats](#) and DSA people, Democratic [honchos](#), uptight [White liberals in suits](#) and “socialists” like [Benjamin Norton](#). Most worrisome is that Linda Sarsour is [an active supporter](#) of [her](#) (and Ocasio-Cortez’s campaign [as well](#)) campaign. Sarsour is a Berniecrat once recognized as a “champion of change” by Obama’s admin, along with also [smearing](#) Syria’s government, [calling](#) for that government’s overthrow and [saying](#) it is [oppressing](#) Syrians. Sarsour [also](#) defended head-chopping [Saudis](#) ([even if](#) she doesn’t “support” them), acts like she critical of the Zionist state but made sure there were no BDS or anti-Zionist signs at the Women’s March in DC, and [supports](#) the Zionist state’s existence, making it clear [she is not](#) really [what she claims](#) to be.³ With all the distortions of Salazar’s personal message caused by her inconsistency, some progressives who would [be prone](#) to support her ideas [have decided](#) to not do so, like [Dave Weigel](#). The [Salazar campaign](#)’s “voter protection teams” won’t protect them from this form of defection, with the same applying to their [get-out-the-vote](#) efforts, with the former organized perhaps because of expected [voter suppression in the district](#) which happened on September 13.

Before her victory, one article in *Vox* stated that “if she wins, it’ll be more evidence that socialists in general and [the DSA in particular](#) are forces to be reckoned within the Democratic Party. If she loses — well, then the DSA will be the socialists who couldn’t even win an election in Bushwick.” Her campaign positions [were clear](#) in a smoothly-made campaign ad (the production and creation which [may have](#) violated FEC regulations) by Means Production, a [entrainment company](#), which is less than three minutes [long](#). It includes [a Reaganesque refrain](#) that it is “morning again in Brooklyn” (repeated three times in the video) while the video itself, worryingly, [declares](#) her campaign will deliver

³ See more of Sarsour’s tweets on “[Syria](#),” “[Israel](#),” “[Zionist](#),” “[Palestine](#),” “[apartheid](#),” “[Saudi Arabia](#),” with tweets on the Saudis acting like she is critical when she has defended them in the past.

“moral clarity” (or “common sense” as it is put elsewhere) but not “radical ideas.” Salazar herself also [only gives](#) unnamed “corporations” & the “real estate body” as the problem without even uttering the word capitalism in the video itself! Wanting a “[more caring society](#)” does not make you socialist either, not because of some non-existent “purity test” but rather that any progressive could say the same exact thing. As one person in *Left Voice* [asked](#), “why couldn’t someone like Julia Salazar run as a socialist, putting the hundreds of DSA members who are canvassing into dialogue with those who are disillusioned with the two-party system? Why can’t the anti-establishment feeling be put in the service of joining a movement against the parties that have sold out the working class and oppressed them again and again? She may not win the election, but the [DSA will have spread](#) socialist ideas and about working class independence from capitalists. And besides, it’s not unheard of for an independent socialist to win an election.” Not sure why she didn’t go that route. Doesn’t seem right, as it would be better to [build structures independent](#) of the Democratic Party [instead](#). Some may have [a point](#) that the DSA is currently being opportunist by allowing her in their ranks or claiming she is spouting a [form of Zionism](#) like [Ocasio-Cortez](#) and Bernie Sanders, but there is more happening than that.

On a connected note, it is worth discussing the NYC-DSA. It is a chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), a group declaring on its homepage that “working people should run both the economy and society democratically to meet human needs, not to make profits for a few” but then just fights for “reforms that empower working people,” [including](#) decreasing the “influence of money in politics...empower[ing] ordinary people in workplaces and the economy [and] restructur[ing]...gender and cultural relationships to be more equitable,” followed by a broad “commitment to democracy.” This may sound nice, but their “free, democratic and humane society” includes a “humane international social order based both on democratic planning and market mechanisms” which sounds horrifying because the latter element means such a society would have capitalist elements! On [another page](#) they declare that “the economy and society should be run

democratically—to meet public needs, not to make profits for a few” which changes in government and economic structures,” adding that they do not want “all-powerful government bureaucracy” and claiming that “worker-owned cooperatives or publicly owned enterprises managed by workers and consumer representatives” would allow social ownership, while also favoring “as much decentralization as possible.” So, they aren’t bringing on the Soviet Union, even though they favor central-planning, which they also just call “democratic planning” which would include, you guessed it, “market mechanisms are needed to determine the demand for many consumer goods.” The group then goes into the land of anti-communism, declaring that “socialists have been among the harshest critics of authoritarian Communist states,” even saying that hey “applaud the democratic revolutions that have transformed the former Communist bloc,” despite the fact the countries are now worse off, and claiming they are also against “ethnic rivalries and/or new forms of authoritarianism.” Even worse, they favor government regulation, tax incentives, and unions to “control” corporations, while favoring a “combination of social, economic, and moral incentives will motivate people to work,” and using social democratic efforts in Sweden, Canada, France, the U\$,and Nicaragua, as “examples” going forward! After they say that the DSA “must work towards reforms that can withstand the power of multinationals and global banks, and we must fight for a world order that is not controlled by bankers and bosses,” they support fighting within the Democratic Party, writing: “...many of us have been active in the Democratic Party. We work with those movements to strengthen the party’s left wing...The process and structure of American elections seriously hurts third party efforts...We hope that at some point in the future, in coalition with our allies, an alternative national party will be viable. For now, we will continue to support progressives who have a real chance at winning elections, which usually means left-wing Democrats.” What a disgusting set of words!

Finally, there is the page about their history, [written by Joseph M. Schwartz](#) (active in the DSA since the beginning), proclaiming that they “made an ethical contribution to the broader American Left

by being one of the few radical organizations born out of a merger rather than a split.” It also says that they “helped popularize the vision of an ecumenical, multi-tendency socialist organization, an ethos that enabled it to recently incorporate recently many thousands of new members, mostly out of the Bernie Sanders presidential campaign,” even welcoming those who “believe in the possibility of independent electoral work inside or outside the Democratic Party ballot line.” This history shows that in 1972 their predecessor, with Michael Harrington ([who believed](#) that the Left could take over the Democratic Party) as a major figure, supported those in the ““new politics” left-liberals in the McGovern wing of the Democrats,” while in the later 1970s they supported a progressive “Democratic Agenda,” building progressive Democratic coalitions in the 1980s, founding the DSA in 1982. The history then complained that “the collapse of communism in 1989 proved less of an immediate boon to democratic socialists than many of us had hoped. Those who had suffered in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union did not embrace socialism with a human face, but rushed headlong into the embrace of a mythic, free market capitalism.” They thought they would benefit from that? Jeez, they do not understand capitalism or the problem with the Soviet Union’s dissolution, which can be grasped even by those critical of the country, especially after 1956 when it entered its revisionist period. The history continues on, saying that the group then called for a single-payer healthcare system in the early 1990s to counter the Clinton health plan, opposed Clinton’s welfare reform, opposed the Iraq and Afghanistan wars early on, called for a “truly progressive tax system” in the early 2000s, joining the Occupy movement from day one, supporting Black Lives Matter, “and fighting against mass incarceration and for equitable urban public education” in more recent years. As an obvious tie into the Democratic Party, the history recalled “DSA’s decision in late 2014 to make its number one priority the movement to support Bernie Sanders running for president. DSA took the position that for maximum exposure and effectiveness, Sanders should not only run, but should run in the Democratic primaries,” even as they admitted that “Bernie’s New Deal or social democratic program did not fulfill the socialist aim of

establishing worker and social ownership of the economy” but it apparently seemed “sufficiently radical and inspiring.” And now they boast that they are “the largest socialist organization in the United States since the Communist Party before its implosion in 1956 after the [false and traitorous] Khrushchev revelations about Stalin” and then declare that “we also are committed to working in coalition with forces that oppose both right-wing rule and the dominant national corporate wing of the Democrats. We want to continue Sanders’ “political revolution” by broadening out that political trend to include a stronger base within the labor movement and, most importantly, among progressive organizations rooted in communities of color. If we take up those challenges, DSA may be able to sustain the most important socialist presence in U.S. politics since the Debsian Socialist era of 1900 to 1920.” Once again, this positioning makes them the perfect sheepdogs for the Democratic Party, clearly as social democrats not as socialists which they call themselves, while they could very easily be using that same energy on building independent structures! Then again, this is unlikely to happen as no Marxist theory is even mentioned on any of these pages at all, showing superficiality of their ideas.⁴

With this, we get back to NYC-DSA. It is currently an [entirely member funded](#) group that is run by more than 3,500 members, saying on its homepage that they are “socialists because we share a vision of a humane social order based on popular control of resources and production, economic planning, equitable distribution, feminism, racial equality, and non-oppressive relationships,” adding that they want to “work together to develop a concrete strategy for achieving that vision, for achieving a transition to democratic socialism in America,” calling for people to help them build a better world. Another page on their website [declares their further aims](#):

4 Some have argued that the DSA [wants socialism](#) but that “trying to transform the imperialist core through electoral means reflects a lack of theoretical understanding of what building socialism necessarily entails,” adding that the “[lack of emphasis on decolonizing](#) (which necessitates the complete destruction of the settler colonial state) shows little practical understanding of what socialism would look like once that building process kicks off.” That opinion has validity, although it still doesn’t seem that they want socialism, but rather want a form of social democracy instead!

a society free of all oppression with a democratically-run, ecologically-sustainable economy...Our goal is a socialist world....A transformation on this scale will require socialist parties and powerful social movements. The goal of NYC-DSA is to move us closer to achieving this transformation...Campaigns for reforms that would improve working-class and oppressed people's lives are key to our ability to organize this base...ultimately it will take a political revolution and massive social transformations to make the lasting changes we are fighting for...Socialists have learned through decades of fighting for reforms that the capitalist system serves the interests of the ruling class. It is designed to meet their needs and insulate their power from threats from below. Our strategy therefore is different from the liberal one. We work to organize millions of people into democratically-led movements that take militant action against bosses and politicians...We believe that the fundamental transformations we are seeking are in the broad interests of all working-class and oppressed people, and our work is focused on organizing among this base...We must pressure Democrats to obstruct Trump's agenda. Mass demonstrations against Trump's actions will also be a regular feature of the next few years...The prospects for winning reforms in the interest of working-class and oppressed people at the city-level would seem to be more promising...the city Democratic Party is divided into three factions, undermining its ability to pass progressive reforms...Because the mayoral and other citywide elections this year appear to be uncompetitive and none of the candidates present a strong progressive vision for the city, we should not take a position on these races. This frees us up to focus our electoral work on a few key City Council races. In general, after full discussion, we will support the most viable progressive candidate who will use their office as a 'bully pulpit' to help build social movements in NYC. We will especially look to find candidates willing to run as democratic socialists...It is critical that all of this work is done with an eye towards building an electoral apparatus — which includes fundraising, canvassing, research,

and volunteers — independent of the Democratic Party and corporate money....As NYC-DSA we also call on the National Convention of DSA to vote to disaffiliate from the Socialist International (SI). The SI is not helping to build an international socialist movement — its member parties work around the world to roll back welfare states and impose austerity.

While this is a bit better than the DSA, it still falls into using the “[Democratic Party line](#),” as Salazar called it. To recall what Salazar herself said, quoted earlier in this article: “the two-party system de facto disenfranchises people, and I can’t see the Democratic Party ultimately being a vessel for the democratic socialist revolution, so it would be silly and shortsighted for democratic socialists to put a lot of effort and resources into that project.” We then can recall what Jimmy Dore, a progressive comedian who [recently declared](#) that “if they play the national anthem at work & make you stand and salute, that's not patriotism, that's fascism. That's what they do in North Korea” (which you could call liberal fascism) and whom doesn't like corporatists but voted for Obama twice (which is a conundrum), [said about the Democrats](#) (as he does often). He argued that they caused the repeal of Glass-Steagall, crash of the economy, banks to get bigger, cops to crack heads at Occupy protests, not stop unions from being taken away from teachers in Wisconsin, joined with the current U\$ president and McConnell to fast-track lifetime appointments of judges, worked with GOP to deregulate Wall Street again and have the biggest Pentagon budget in U\$ history (717 billion dollars), take fossil fuel money, and have a new DNC rule that to run as a candidate in the Democratic Party, head of DNC gets to decide whether the candidate is sufficiently loyal to the party. He also said that Democrats have been in decline for decades, that superdelegates are still there but just don’t vote for the President in the first-round, that many people associate with Democrats because they are an “inferior good” and that there is “no way they will allow progressives to take over the party.” But ultimately to Jimmy Dore and his guests stuck with the Democrats, while one admitted that progressive victories could be sapping energy that could

be used to create a new political party, but another said” right now that is not an option,” echoing what Salazar said. It is this defeatist attitude which is part of the problem.

Ultimately there is one major problem with Salazar’s candidacy, as is the case with Ocasio-Cortez, it sucks grassroots energy into electoral politics like a vacuum cleaner bringing in loads of dust.⁵ The same could even be said of Kshama Sawant in Seattle, running as part of the Trotskyist Socialist Alternative grouping. Specifically in the case of Salazar, Ocasio-Cortez, and many others, their energy would be sucked into the Democratic Party. Even Socialist Alternative, which endorsed Salazar, admitted this, declaring that “it’s essentially impossible to rip the Democratic Party as a whole from its corporate leadership. To win far-reaching change a new mass workers party will be needed.” This seems to be embodied within the Party of Communists – USA (PCUSA), [which declares](#) that “the Republican and Democratic Parties represent and work for the basic interests of capital, the large stockholders of General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler...The PCUSA proposes a realistic policy that is neither sectarian nor set in stone nor just latches on to the Democratic Machine.” As such, it is clear that DSA does not fulfill this goal. Rather, they are sending more people to their spiritual deaths, not through spending “more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift” as Martin Luther King, Jr. [put it in 1967](#), as they will be swallowed into the Democratic machine just like that Futurama episode where a beast [takes in people’s life essence](#), expanding its ego to absurdist proportions. Some can try to be “super” progressive within the Democratic Party, but eventually those people will crack sooner or later like [Ocasio-Cortez did](#) when she could not explain what the “occupation of Palestine” meant, later declaring that “I believe absolutely in Israel’s right to exist. I’m a proponent of the two

5 One Princeton historian, Matt Karp, who is friends with Salazar, [wrote](#) that “if there was anything individually notable about Julia’s run for office, it was the idea that an ordinary person could pick up the mantle to run for state senate, not based on a claim of spectacular virtue, but a commitment to represent the needs and values of the people in her district. Now we see what happens when an ordinary person—bound to the ordinary extraordinary complexities of a life lived outside the confines of a resume—challenges the power of a political elite.” While that has its validity, it also poses her as some progressive shining star on a hill, something she is definitely not, and ignores the real problem with her candidacy is not her personal story or her ideas, but what it means for the political landscape and the faltering Democratic Party, with the same applying to other progressives who run on the Democratic Party line to try and push the party “to the Left,” a task which is an utter waste of time.

state solution. For me, this is not a referendum on the state of Israel.” No matter what happens to Salazar ultimately, whether she wins in November or not, her candidacy serves an ultimate purpose to the corporatist leadership of the Democratic Party: it keeps the party them alive and breathing, allowing it to support rampant imperialism, the actions of the current U\$ administration, and continue to shaft the proletariat, among reinforcing efforts to enact their capitalist ideology. As such, while one could, without much thought, praise Salazar for her reformist ideas, there should be a more determined effort to create structures and institutions which exist outside the two-party system, allowing for a focus on more productive endeavors than just participating in elections.